

Original.

THE HAUNTED HOMESTEAD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BROTHERS," "CROMWELL," ETC.

THE MURDER.

THERE are few wilder spots on earth, than the deep wooded gorge through which the waters of the mad Ashuelot rush northward from the pellucid lakelets, embosomed in the eastern spurs of the great Alleghany chain, whence it starts rash and rapid—meet emblem of ambitious man—upon its brief career of foam and fury. The hills—mountains, in bold abruptness, if not by actual height entitled to the name—sinking precipitous and sheer, to the bed of the chafing river, which, in the course of ages, has scarpred and channelled their rude sides, and cleft the living granite a hundred fathom down, have left scant space below for a wild road, here hewn or blasted through strata of the eternal rock, there reared upon abutments of rough logs, and traversing some five times in each mile of distance, the devious torrent, as it wheels off in arrowy angles from side to side of its stern channel. Above, so perpendicularly do the cliffs ascend, that the huge pines, which shoot out from each rift and crevice of their seamed flanks, far overhang the path, dropping their scaly cones into the boiling caldrons of the stream, and almost interlacing their black boughs; so that midsummer's noon scarce pours a wintry twilight into the damp and cavernous ravine, while a November's eve lowers darker than a starless midnight. Even now, when the hand of enterprise has dotted the whole circumjacent region with prosperous farms and thriving villages, it is a desolate and gloomy pass; but in the years immediately succeeding the war of the independence—when, for unnumbered miles, the land around was clothed in its primeval garniture of forest—when but two tiny hamlets, Keene and Fitzwilliam, had been late-founded on the mountain track, at that time the sole thoroughfare between the young states of New Hampshire and Vermont, with scarce a human habitation in all the dreary miles that intervened between those infant settlements, it was indeed as fearful, ay, and as perilous a route as ever struck dismay into the bosom of lone traveller. Those were rude days and stern! those were days that, in truth, and in more modes than one, tried—shrewdly tried—men's souls! War had, indeed, passed over—but many of its worst attributes and adjuncts still harrassed the unsettled land. Traffic had been well nigh abolished—the culture of the earth had been neglected—want, bitter want, pervaded the whole country—the minds of men, long-used to violence and strife and rapine, slowly resumed their calm and governed tenor—disbanded soldiers, the outcasts of the patriot forces, broken and desperate characters, roamed singly or in bands, without resources or employment, through every state of the new union; nor had the Indian, undismayed by the weak government of the scarce-formed republic, censured from his late-indulged career of massacre and havoc. Such was the period—such the nature of the times—

when on a lowering and fitful evening toward the last days of October, a mounted traveller was seen to pass the sandhills, which form the jaws of the gorge on the southern side, on his way northward, to Vermont; wherein large tracts of fertile land were offered by the government for sale, at rates which tempted many to become purchasers and settlers in that romantic district. The sun had set already when he rode past the door of the one lowly tavern which then, as for the most part is the case in all new settlements, was the chief building of Fitzwilliam. A heavy mass of dark grey clouds, surging up slowly from the west, had occupied, at least, one half of the fast-darkening firmament; broad gouts of rain fell one by one at distant intervals; and the deep melancholy sigh of the west wind wailed through the dismal gorge of the Ashuelot in a foreboding of the near tempest. The landlord of that humble hostelry stood in his lowly doorway, and warned the lated wayfarer to 'light down for the night, and take the morning with him for his guide through the wild pass that lay before him; but he who was thus timely warned, shook his head only in reply, and asking, in his turn, the distance to Hartley's Hawknest tavern, learned that six miles, of dangerous wild road, yet intervened between him and his destined harbor. For half a minute it seemed as though he doubted, for he drew in his rein and gazed with an inquiring glance toward the threatening heavens; at all events, his hesitation, if such it were, soon ended, he doubled the cape of his short horseman's cloak closer about his neck, touched his horse lightly with the spur, and cantered moderately onward. He was a tall and slight, though sinewy figure, with something in his air, and in the practised grace wherewith he sat and wheeled his horse, that spoke of military service—nor did his dress, although not strictly martial, belie the supposition; the square-topped cap of otter-skin, the braided loops and frogs on his bussar-like cloak, the leathern breeches, and high boots, equipped with long brass spurs, were by no means dissimilar to the accoutrements of sundry among the regiments of continental horse, disbanded at the termination of the war, although divested of the lace and colored facings, which would have made them strictly uniform. The animal, moreover, which he rode, had evidently been subjected to the manege, for he was well upon his haunches, with the arched neck and light mouth, champing on the bit, that speak so certainly the well-trained charger—his saddle, too, equipped with holsters at the bow, and a small valise at the cantle, was covered with a handsome bear-skin; while the bridle, with its nosebag, its cavesson, and brass-scaled frontlet, had yet more certainly been decorated so for no pacific purpose. Darker, and darker yet, frowned the dim skies above him, as threading the black pass, with no guide save the chafing roar of the vexed waters, and the white glistening of their tortured spray, he hastened onward; and now the wind, which had long sobbed and moaned among the giant pines, that lent a heavier gloom to the dark twilight road, raved out in savage gusts, whirling away the smaller branches, like straws, in their mad dalliance; the ruin, at every lull, plashing upon the

slippery rocks—the thunder crashing and roaring at the zenith, and the pale fires of heaven flashing in ghostly sheets across the narrow stripe of sky, which alone showed between the wood-fringed cliffs glooming on either hand, five hundred feet aloft. Yet not for rain or storm did the good charger flinch, or the bold rider curb him. With his head bowed upon his breast, his rein relaxed and free, and his foot firm in the stirrup, as confident in the high qualities of his generous steed, fleetly and fearlessly he galloped onward; turn after turn of the stern glen he doubled—bridge after bridge clattered beneath his thundering stride—mile after mile was won—and now, as he wheeled round the base of a huge rocky buttress—from which the stream, rebuffed by its massy weight, swept off in a wide reach to the right hand, while on the left the hills receded somewhat from its brink, leaving a sylvan amphitheatre of a few acres circuit—the lights of the small wayside inn, known, in those days, to all who traversed the frontiers of the neighbor states, as Hartley's Hawknest, glanced cheerfully upon the traveller's eyes. It was a long, low, log-built tenement, with several latticed windows looking toward the river which it faced, the upper story projecting so far as to constitute a rugged sort of galleried piazza. A glorious weeping elm, that loveliest of forest trees, stood at the southern end; its drooping foliage, serene, now, and changed from its rich verdure, overshadowing many a yard of ground, and its gigantic trunk, garnished with rings and staples, whereto were fastened, as the stranger galloped up, two or three sorry-looking, ill-conditioned horses, meanly caparisoned with straw-stuffed pads and hempen halters, waiting the leisure of their masters, who were employed—as many a snatch of vulgar song, and many a burst of dissonant harsh laughter pealing into the bosom of the night, betokened—in rude debauchery within. A rudely-fashioned spout of timber discharged a stream of limpid water into a huge stone cistern, whence it leaped with a merry murmur, and ran gurgling down a pebbled channel to join the river in the bottom—and beyond this, a long range of sheds and stabling stood out at a right angle to the tavern. Pausing before the open shed, the stranger saw, with no small feelings of annoyance, that the whole length of its unplanned and sordid manger was occupied by a large drove of horses; while, by the stamp of hoofs within, and muzzling sounds as of beasts busy with their provender, he readily guessed that the stables, also, were completely crowded. Linking his panting charger, therefore, to one of the hooks in the elm-tree, and throwing his own cloak across its croupe, he stepped across the threshold into the thronged and smoky bar-room. The inn, as he had but too surely augured, was crowded to the utmost—a drove of horses, on their way southward from Vermont, had come in that same evening, their drivers having engaged every bed and pallet in the house—a dozen farmers of the neighborhood, scared from proceeding on their homeward routes by the terrific aspect of the night, had occupied the little parlor—the very bar-room floor was strewn with buffalos and blankets, whereon reposed a dozen sturdy forms, seemingly undisturbed by the obscene and stormy revelling of

several of their comrades, who had preferred a night-long drinking bout to a hard couch and uncertain slumbers. There needed scarce a question to ascertain that not a spot remained where he could spread his cloak; nor, which weighed most with him, a shed, however lowly, wherein to stable his good horse. Nothing remained, then, but to procure a feed of oats for the worn animal, some slight refreshment for himself, and to proceed, as best he might, to Keene, still twelve miles distant, with the worst portions of the road yet to be overcome. No long space did it take the youth, for he was young and eminently handsome; and, as the lights displayed his lythe and active symmetry, set off by a close frock of forest green, edged in accordance with the fashion of the day, by a thin cord of gold, none who looked on him could fail to discover the gentleman of birth and breeding in every feature of his face, in every gesture of his active frame. And eagerly and keenly did many an eye of those who revelled round him, of those who seemed to slumber, scan his whole form, and dress, and bearing. Several gaunt, wolfish-looking men, muffled in belted blanket coats, bearded and grim and hideous, proffered him their revolting hospitality, and would fain, as it seemed, have entered into converse with him; but while offending none by any thing of haughtiness or of direct avoidance, he yet withdrew himself from their company, and sat wrapped in his own meditations until the voice of the landlord summoned him to the scant meal, which he discussed in haste, and standing; this ended, he drew forth his purse to pay his reckoning; nor was it 'till he noted the quick and fiery glances which shot from many an eye, dwelt gloatingly upon the silken network, through which gleamed many a golden coin, that he became aware of his imprudence in drawing out so large a sum, as he had thus unwittingly displayed before so doubtful an assemblage. Nor did the consequences of his error fail to stand visibly before him, when sundry of the bystanders offered to yield their places to the stranger, should he prefer to tarry; and one, a tall, dark-visaged, gloomy-looking man, wearing a long and formidable butcher-knife in his buff belt, and holding a tall rifle in his hand, announced his intention to ride some three miles on the way toward Keene, forthwith, to the spot where his own homeward path branched off from the main road, tendered his services and company, as a guide well acquainted with the pass; and even offered him a night's lodging in his own cabin. While thus addressed, the stranger was aware of a shrewd meaning look which the landlord cast toward him as he handed him his change; but seeing no mode whereby to avoid the man's society, and feeling that he should more easily be able to defend himself if assailed, against a person by his side, than against one who might, unseen, waylay him, he was contented with declining the night's lodging, and courteously accepted his assistance as a guide. The wind had quite sunk as he again mounted his recruited charger, and the storm had swept over; yet was the road as dark as a wolf's mouth through the ravine, which narrowed more and more as they proceeded farther, and was even more obscured by the precipitous hills and overhanging foliage. Slowly they

journeyed on, compelled to spare their speed by the deep channels and huge stones which broke the surface of the path; and close and various were the questionings to which the traveller was subjected by his acute, although, untutored guide. Acute, however, as he was, he had met, in the stranger, his full match; for, seemingly responding to each query with perfect and accommodating frankness, he yet contrived to say no word which should give any clue to his intentions or his destination; so that when they had reached the spot where their paths separated, the countryman knew nothing more than when they had set forth, of his companion's views or business.

"Well, sir," he said, speaking in better language than might have been expected from his appearance and demeanor, "well, sir, since you will not accept my humble hospitality, I wish you a good night. We shall most likely never meet again—if so, I wish you well, sir. I, too, have been a soldier—mind, when you reach the next bridge, directly you have passed it, you take the right hand path; a little brook you'll have to ford, and it may be a thought high from this rain; but you will find it safe and a good bottom! No! no!" he added, as the traveller would have slipped a guinea into the hand he had extended—"no! no! I have done you no service; I will take no reward! Good night!"

"Good night, and thanks!" returned the other—and they parted! the traveller, in half repentant thought, blaming himself with generous self-reproach for the suspicious fears he had half entertained of his guide's good faith, and, for the moment, well nigh regretting that he had not accompanied the other to his hospitable home. But thoughts like these were soon absorbed in the necessity of looking to the guidance of his horse among the various difficulties of darkness and an unknown road—and now he reached the first bridge, and the cross track by which he was directed to proceed. Yet, though he had forgot no syllable of his instructions, he hesitated; for the left hand was evidently the most travelled route, and that, by which he had been told to journey, seemed but a narrow and occasional bye path. He hesitated, and while he stood there, a wild whooping cry rang on his ear; a melancholy, long-protracted wail, followed by the quick flapping of wide wings. As the first sound burst on his ear, the horseman started, and half turned in his saddle, thrusting his hand, meantime, into his ready holsters—but as the final notes were followed by the heavy rush of pinions on the night wind—"Why, what a timorous fool am I," he muttered, "to be thus scared by the chance clamor of a silly fowl! Well! well! 'tis of a piece with my late doubts," and setting spurs to his reluctant horse—reluctant to turn into that bye path—he trotted forward. A few steps brought him to a small gloomy hollow—the bed of the brooklet mentioned by the farmer—now swollen by the late storm into the semblance of a wintry torrent, brawling among loose stones, and at a few yards' distance from the ford dashing a sheet of broad white foam over a rocky ridge into the fierce Ashuelot. The trees grew close down to the brink on either hand, o'er canoping the dismal ford—the water was as black as Acheron! The

traveller drew in his rein, and steered his charger cautiously down the steep bank, when, as his fore feet touched the marge, a heavy blow was dealt him from behind, with a huge bludgeon, bowing him to the horse's neck. Before he could recover, a second followed, truly aimed at the juncture of the spine and scull; a flash of myriad sparks streamed through his reeling eyes—his brain spun round and round—and, with a heavy sullen splash, he fell into the shallow pool—a strong hand wheeled the charger round, and a smart blow upon the quarters, sent him in full career over the self-same road which he had lately traversed under the guidance of a master's hand. The freshness of the water lavishing his forehead, lent, for a moment, a new life to the wounded traveller—he sprang to his feet, and grappled at the throat of his unseen assailant! Just at that point of time, a single sheeted flash, the last faint glimmering of the retreated storm, played for a moment on the sky—he recognized by that faint glimmer the dark visage and the gloomy scowl—he marked the glitter of the long butcher-knife, too late to parry its home thrust. One cry on God for mercy! one long, sick thrilling gasp! one fluttering shudder of the convulsed and lifeless limbs! and his heart's blood was mingled with the turbulent stream—and he lay at the feet of his destroyer, a mere clod in the valley.

H. W. H.

Original.

THE YOUNG WIDOW'S LAMENT.

THE death-bell tolled, and it fell on my ear,
Like the knell of departed bliss;
As I gazed in despair on William's bier,
With eyes that were burning without a tear,
To soften a pang like this!

For William was all that I valued below,
His bosom was honor's shrine—
His hand to the needy was prompt to bestow,
While he lighted up "smiles in the aspect of woe,"
And kindled new rapture in mine.

But Fate was relentless, and William bowed
To a sudden and early doom,
No longer the life of the listening crowd
He lowly reclines in a coffin and shroud,
And sleeps in the narrow tomb.

They made him a bed in the cold damp ground,
Where they laid my love to rest;
The sable-clad mourners stood silent around,
And sigh'd in response to the murmuring sound
Of the clods, as they fell on his breast.

My heart was so full that I could not weep,
With spasms I drew my breath;
My sobs were so low and convulsively deep,
That I hoped soon to share in my William's sleep,
In the chilly embrace of death.

From these widowed arms my love was torn,
When hope was revelling bright;
And his spirit has passed the eternal bourne,
While hapless Amelia is left to mourn
Through Sorrow's starless night.

But morning will dawn, and I shall rise
When life's brittle cord shall sever,
In regions far brighter, I'll open my eyes,
And meet my dear William above the skies,
To part no more for ever.

SAMUEL WOODWORTH.

the pang it brings, to feel that one you have pained is beyond the reach of your repentance, the heart grows faint with a wish to humble itself once again to the dead."

"Self-reproach is indeed dreadful," said Tahmeroo, thoughtfully; "but see, our boy is coming!"

A beautiful lad, also in mourning, came toward them with a letter in his hand. Walter Murray took it and broke the seal.

"It is from Mr. Varnham—he wishes us to reside constantly at the parsonage," said he, thoughtfully, refolding the letter.

"And you will go now," said his wife, anxiously. "The good old gentleman is so lonely—do let us go!"

"Yes, we will go," replied Walter; and taking his son's hand, they left the church-yard.

Our other picture was a low red farm-house, in the valley of Wyoming: fields of corn and grain, and a few acres of green wood-land surrounded it. Well-filled barns, lofty hay-stacks, and sleek cattle, gave an air of comfort, if not of wealth, to the whole. Glimpses of the Susquehannah could be seen from the front door—and Wilkesbarre, with its single spire and cluster of houses, broke up from the foot of a green mountain in the distance. It was a summer's day; the door which led from the kitchen into the garden, was open. Two fine boys, who had been sent to weed the vegetables, were racing through a patch of cabbages, and pelting each other with green apples and handfuls of chickweed. A handsome, cheerful woman, was working over butter in the porch; and just within the door, sat a stout, healthy man, fitting a hoe-handle.

"Father! father! cried the boys, racing in from the garden; "we've weeded the beet-beds—now wont you tell us about the Ingen fight?"

"Go to your aunt Mary," replied Edward Clark, screwing the handle into the eye of his hoe; "she can tell it a great deal better than I can."

"Aunt Mary, will you?" pleaded the elder boy, going up to a fair, blue-eyed woman, with a hunch-back, who sat nursing a sickly infant by the window, and placing his arms coaxingly about her neck.

"Not now, dear," said Mary Derwent, kissing the bold, open brow of the suppliant; "see, poor little sister is almost asleep. Run back to your work, and when she is in the cradle I will come and help you."

"But will you tell about the massacre?"

"Yes, love."

"About the Mohawk and the white queen—and how you and mother sailed down the river on a log, 'till father came and took you off—will you tell us the whole story from beginning to end?"

"Yes, yes—now run to your work."

New-York, July, 1837.

It is evident that nature has made man susceptible of experience, and consequently more and more perfectible; it is absurd, then, to wish to arrest him in his course, in spite of the eternal law which impels him forward.—*Du Marsais.*

Original.

THE HAUNTED HOMESTEAD.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BROTHERS," "CROMWELL," ETC.

THE MYSTERY.

It was now long past midnight, and—though the storm, which had so fiercely raved through the dim gorge of the Ashuelot, had spent its fury hours ago—the clouds yet hung heavy and low in grey and ghost-like wreaths along the mountain sides; the stars were all unseen in their high-places; the moon, hid in her vacant interlunar cave, offered no gracious rays to the belated traveller. The lights, however, of the Hawknest, glimmering through its narrow casement, poured their long lines of yellow lustre into the bosom of the darkness, while, from within, the loud laugh of the revellers proclaimed that sleep, that night, held no uninterrupted sway over the inmates of the wayside tavern. The scene in the small bar-room, was much the same as it has been described at a period some hours earlier on the same dismal night. The landlord, his avarice contending with his natural love of rest, scarce half awake, sat nodding in the bar; eight or nine men, in various postures of uneasy sleep, cumbered the unswept floor, wrapped up in blanket coats and buffalo robes; while five or six, their fellows, sat round a dirty pine table, playing at cards with a pack, the figures on which were all but invisible through the deep coat of filth and grease that covered them—and occasionally calling for some compound of the various fiery mixtures, which had already half-besotted their dull intellects. Such was the scene, and such the occupation of the casual inmates who that night filled the Hawknest tavern; when, suddenly, in the midst of a profound silence, which had endured for many minutes, unbroken, except by the fluttering sound of the cards, thrown heedlessly upon the board, the hicough of the waking—or the heavy snore of the sleeping—drunkard!—suddenly there was heard a crash—a thundering crash, that made the walls of the low cottage reel, and the glasses positively jingle on the table—a crash, that simultaneously aroused all hands—some from their heavy slumbers, others from their engrossing game, to sudden terror and amazement! It seemed as if some ponderous weight had fallen on the floor of the room overhead. With anxious eager eyes they gazed into each other's faces, speechlessly waiting for some repetition of the sound! "What's that in the devil's name?" asked one, pot valor mingling strangely with amazement in his blank features—"What's in the chamber overhead?"

"Nothing," replied the landlord, who appeared the most thoroughly dismayed of all the company—"there's nothing in it now, nor hasn't been these ten years!"

"The chimney's fallen, then—that's it, boys! that's it, I'll be sworn, so you hadn't need look scart! The chimney's been shook by the wind, Jackson, and so it's jest now fell, and frightened all of us most out of our wits."

This explanation, plausible as it seemed at first sight, was eagerly admitted by the party, anxious to adopt any

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reasoning that might efface their fast-growing superstition—but as the speaker ceased—while two or three of the boldest were in the act of moving toward the door as if to ascertain the truth of his suggestion, a strange, wild, wailing sound was heard, as it were, of the west wind rising after a lull. There was, however, in its tone, something more thrilling and less earthly than ever was marked in the cadences of the most furious gale that swept over earth or ocean. Wilder it waxed and wilder—louder and louder every instant, till it was no less difficult to catch the import of words spoken in that sheltered bar-room, than it had been upon a frigate's forecastle.

"God—what a hurricane!" cried one, and rushed to the door which opened directly on the road; but, as it yielded to his touch, no furious gust broke in—the air without was calm and motionless—not a twig quivered on the lofty elm, not a cloud stirred from its stance along the rocky flanks of the ravine, not a breath stirred the pendulous vane upon the gable—still that shrill, tremulous, rocking sound rang through the chambers of the tavern; and in an instant, every inmate of its walls, women, and men, and children, half dressed, and pale, and trembling—as if ague-stricken—rushed down the creaking stairs, seeking for safety in companionship, and ere five minutes had elapsed, all were collected on the little space of greensward that sloped toward the east from the road downward to the river. Still the wild sound wailed on—and more than one of the stout woodsmen, their minds already half familiarized to that which had appalled them at the first, more from its suddenness than from any other cause, were rallying their scattered senses—when the tones rose yet shriller and more piercing, and changed, as it were, by magic, into a burst of the most fiendish and unnatural laughter; while two or three of the upper casements flew violently open, as if forced from within by some power which they could not resist. Upon the instant, actuated by some strange impulse which he could not himself have well explained, he who had been, from the first, the boldest of the party, levelled his rifle at the central window, and drew the trigger without uttering a word—the powder flashed in the pan, vivid and keen the stream of living flame burst from the muzzle, but the report, if such there were, was drowned in a yell that pealed from the same window, so horribly sustained, so long, so agonized, that the blood curdled in the stout hearts, while several of the women swooned outright, or fell into hysterics; and the continued outcries of the terrified children lasted long after the sounds, which had excited them, subsided into total silence—for with that awful and heart-rending shriek, the terrible disturbance ended. Some time elapsed without the utterance of a word—the distant lightning flickered across the dark horizon—the bat came flitting on his leathern wings around the eaves and angles of the low inn—the whip-poor-will was heard chanting his oft-repeated melancholy chant down in the thickets by the waterside, and the far rushing of the turbulent Ashuelot rose with a soothing murmur upon the silent night. By slow degrees the pallid and awe-stricken group recovered from their deep dismay—Dirk Ericson, the woodsman,

who had discharged his rifle as fearlessly against the powers of air as though it had been against the breast of mortal foe—Dirk was a sturdy borderer from the frontiers of New-York, who had learned soldiership and woodcraft under the kindred guidance of Mad Anthony—Dirk Ericson was the first to enter the walls of the haunted dwelling, for such all now believed, closely escorted, however, by two sturdy brothers, Asa and Enoch Allen, sons of the soil, and natives of the wild gorge, through which they had so often chased the red-deer, or trapped the savage catamount. They entered, slowly, indeed, and guardedly—and with the muzzles of their true rifles lowered, and their knives loosened in the sheath as if to meet the onset of beings like themselves—but well nigh fearlessly—for their's were mountain-bred, tough hearts, which—the first sudden start passed over—feared neither man nor devil. They entered, but no sign or sight was there that showed of peril—the lights stood there unsmoked, capped with large fiery fun-gusses, but burning quietly away—the glasses were untouched upon the board as when the revellers left them—the blankets of the sleepers lay undisturbed upon the dusty boards.

"Nothing here, boys," cried the undaunted Dirk. "Let's see if the devil's up stairs yet! I a'n't afeared on him, boys, no how!" and snatching up a light, he rushed with a quick step, as though half doubtful of his own resolution, up the frail, clattering staircase. There, the large open space immediately above the bar-room, from which the other chambers opened, was, indeed, absolutely empty—there was no particle of furniture which could have fallen! no! not a billet of a wood, nor a stray brick! nor, in short, any symptom of the by-gone disturbance, except a few chips of plaster, which had been broken from the wall by Dirk's unerring bullet, and now lay scattered on the floor. They searched the house from the garret to the cellar, and found no living thing, and heard no sound, but of their own making. They joined the group upon the green, and as they told of their fruitless search, the courage of all present rose! And soon it was agreed, that no one had been in the least degree alarmed; and it was almost doubted by some among the number, whether there had, indeed, been any sounds, but what might be accounted for on natural causes. While they were yet in anxious conversation, another sound came from a distance on their ears, but this time, it was one to which all there were well accustomed—the hard tramp of a horse, apparently at a full gallop down the pass from the northward.

"Here comes a late traveller," cried mine host. "Bustle, lads, bustle—best not be caught out hereaways, like a lot of scart chickens—jump, there, you Peleg Young, and fetch the lanthorn."

Some of the party, as he spoke, turned inward, and betook themselves to a renewal of their potations as to some solace for the troubles they had undergone; while others, Ericson and his confederate hunters among the number, lingered to greet or gaze at the new comer. Nearer and nearer came the hard clanging tramp—and now Dirk shook his head.

"There is no bridle on that beast," he said—"least-

wise if there be bridle, there a'n't no hand to steer it. Hark! how wildlike it clatters down yon stony pitch—now it has started off the road upon the turf—and now—it's a shodden hoof, too—see how it strike the fire on the hill-side! There a'n't no rider there, or else my name's not Dirk."

Even as he spoke—bridled and saddled, but with his bridle flying loose, embossed with foam, reeking with sweat, and splashed with soil and clay of every hue and texture, a noble horse dashed at full speed into the very centre of the group, and stopping short with a couple of small, sudden plunges, and a wild whinny, stood perfectly quiet, and suffered Dirk to catch him by the bridle without any attempt at flight or resistance.

"Why, it's the traveller's horse," he cried, almost upon the instant—"the stranger gentleman's—that stopped in jest to supper, and rode on with black Cornelius Heyer. Here's a queer go, now! something's gone wrong, I reckon—show a light here!"

"The horse has come down, Dirk, in the rough road; and the traveller's pitched off, I guess; we'll have him here to-rights," said Asa Allen.

"You're out this time, boy," answered the woodman; "this beast harnt been down this night, any ways," as he examined his knees by the light of the winking lantern, "and the stranger warn't the last to pitch off, if he had. That chap was an old Dragoon, and a Virginian too, I reckon. This bridle's broke, too—and see here, this long, thick wheal upon his flank—the traveller hadn't no whip with him—and the blow what made this, was struck from behind, by a man on foot—see, it slants downward, forward and downward, tapering off to the front end! There's been foul play here, anywise! Take hold of his head, Asa—and give me the light, you Peleg, till I look over his accoutrements. Pistols both in the holsters—that looks curious, and—this here cover's been pulled open, though, and in hurry, too, for the loop's broke—both loaded! Ha! here's a drop of blood—jest one drop on the pommel. The traveller's had foul play, boys—he has, no question of it!"

"And what we heerd, was sent to tell us on't!" replied another.

"Past doubt it was," said Dirk, "and we'll hear more of it, if we don't stir ourselves, and search out this unnat'ral murder. The task's fell upon us, boys; and we have got jest to keep mighty straight, and obey orders! Who'll go along with me—you, Asa, and you, Enoch, I count upon—you'll stick to old Dirk's tracks, I know—who else?"

"I will, and I, and I," responded several voices of the rough borderers, who had again assembled at this new cause of excitement, and who were, perhaps, less alarmed at the prospect of a tramp through the woods, and even a skirmish with mortal enemies, than of passing the remainder of the night in that haunted homestead. Rifles were hunted up and loaded; pouches and horns and wood-knives slung or belted; horses were saddled; and in less than half an hour, eight hardy woodmen were in their stirrups, ready to follow old Dirk Ericson wherever he might guide them.

"Well, Dirk, what's the fix now? how'll we set to, to find him?"

"Why, he set out from here, you see, with black Cornelius," answered the veteran, "and no one else has travelled up since they two quit, so we can take their track to where they parted; and so see, if it be, as Cornelius quit at his own turn; and if he did, two on us can jest ride up and see if he's in bed, and tell him how it's chanced; and the rest on us follow up the stranger's track to where the mischief has fell out. We'll hunt it out, I reckon—leastwise, if I lose the trail on't, there must be e'en a most plaguy snarl in't."

No more was said—the plan was evidently good—two or three lanterns were provided; and having ascertained the tracks of the two horses—the noble charger of the stranger, and the mean gasson of the farmer—easily visible in the deep mud which lay in every hollow of the route, the little band got under way in silence. Their progress was, of course, slow and guarded, for it was absolutely necessary to pause from time to time, and survey the ground; so to make sure that they had not o'errun the scent—but still at every halt, their caution was rewarded, for, in each muddy spot, the double trail was clearly visible. They reached the well known turning, and, much to the relief of all concerned, in the night search, the farmer's hoof-track diverged from that of his companion, wheeling directly homeward; they could see even where the horses of the two had pawed and poached the ground, while they had held brief parley ere they parted.

"Now, then," said Dirk, "so far, our course is clear! but now comes all the snarl on't. Well, we must see to't how we can best. Asa and Enoch, hear to me, boys—follow up Heyer's track clear to the eend on't—and take note of every stop and turn on't; and if he has gone home, creep up quite quiet to the windows, and see if he's in bed, or how. But don't you rouse him, no how—and when he's fairly lodged, the one on you set right down where you can watch the door, and let the tother come down to the road by the back track, past Lupton's branch, and so keep up the main road till he overtakes us. Take a light with you, boys, and keep a bright look out! The rest come on with me."

So perfect was the confidence of the whole party, in the old hunter's deep sagacity, that not a question was asked, much less an opinion given in opposition to his orders. Away rode the detachment, and on moved the main body—their work becoming, at every step, more difficult and intricate, since, having now no clue, at all, they were compelled to ascertain the trail, foot by foot. Much time had been spent, therefore, before they reached the second turning of the road close to the bridge, under which Lupton's branch fell into the main river. Here, as we know already, the hapless rider had qitted the true path; and here our company, for the first time, overshot the scent—for, nothing doubting that the trail lay right onward the road, from the fork upward to the bridge, being so hard, and of a soil so rocky as to give no note of any footmarks—they galloped forward to the next muddy bottom, when, pausing to look for the guiding track, they found, at once, that it had not passed further.

"Here's the snarl, boys! here's the snarl," shouted Dirk. "Down, every one on you; we must e'en hunt it

out by inches. You, Andry Hewson, hold all the horses—Spencer and Young get forrard with the lights, and hold them low down to the airth, I tell you!"

His orders were obeyed implicitly; and in a short time the result was the discovery of the horse-track turning away on the other side of the bridge, into the blind and unused bye-path.

"There's devilry in this," muttered the crafty veteran. "Dark as it was, there still was light enough to show the main track—and neither horse nor man would turn off into this devil's hole, unless they had been told to. It's no use mounting, boys, I tell you—the trouble's been hard by here, now I tell you!"

They made the trail good to the branch, the last tracks being of the hind feet on the very marge of the turbulent stream—they crossed it, but no foot-print had deranged one pebble on the verge! "Try back, once more," cried Dirk, "try back—this is the very spot!" and in a few more moments the sod spurned up, where the startled charger had wheeled round in terror as his master fell, revealed another secret of the dark mystery. Every stone was now turned, every leaf or branch removed that might have been disposed to cover the assassin's tracks, but all in vain! A little dam of stones was now run out into the stream, under old Ericson's direction, so as to turn the waters into a channel somewhat different from their wonted course; a narrow stripe of mud was thus exposed to sight, which had, of late, been covered by the foamy ripples, and there, the very spot whereon the traveller's corpse had fallen, with a large foot-print by the side of it, was rendered clear to every eye! Beyond this, and one splash of blood close to the water's edge, all clue was lost. The morning dawned while they were yet busy with the search, and the broad sun came out, banishing every shadow, and revealing every secret of sweet nature, but no light does his radiance cast on this dread mystery. The woods were searched for miles around—the waters of the wild Ashuelot were dragged for leagues of distance—all to no purpose! No spot of soil had been disturbed—the pools and shallows gave up no dead.

While they were yet employed about the ford, one of the young allies returned with the tidings that Heyer's trail ran straight home—that his horse had been turned out into its wonted pasture—that the door was unlocked, and a light burning in the chamber, which showed the man calmly reclining on his bed in the undisturbed slumbers of apparent innocence.

With this all clue was lost; and, save that night after night the same hellish disturbance resounded through the chambers of the tavern, till the inhabitants, fairly unable to endure the terrors of this nightly uproar, abandoned it to solitude and ruin, the very story of the hapless traveller might well have been forgotten even on the very scene of his murder.

H. W. H.

NOBILITY is not only in dignity and ancient lineage, nor great revenues, lands, or possessions, but in wisdom, knowledge, and virtue, which, in man, is very nobility, and this nobility bringeth man to dignity. Honor ought to be given to virtue, and not to riches.—*Anarchæsis*.

Original.

"OUR LIBRARY."—No. V.

BY EMMA C. EMBURY.

GENTLE READER, since I have presented thee with the freedom of that narrow but well peopled domain, 'yclept "Our Library," it seemeth good unto me to make thee acquainted with some of the inhabitants of the place. Now, seeing that all love to reverence age, let us begin by visiting some of the worthies of past days, and, albeit the fashion of the world changeth even as a garment, and the garb in which the spiritual creatures of the brain are now clothed, differs widely from the fantastic trappings, with which the men of olden time were wont to adorn their intellectual offspring, yet let us not be frightened from our propriety by a pointed beard, a slashed doublet, or a sugar loaf hat. He was a man, although a king, who desired "old wood to burn, old wine to drink, old books to read, and old friends to converse with." There is an indescribable pleasure in throwing back the shelf-worn covers of some antique folio, and plunging into the midst of its rugged sentences, in which are embedded so many gems of thought. Or if one be disposed to indulge an idle disposition, how delightful is it to seize upon some of the gossiping memoirs or diaries of former times, and pry into the domestic life of those, who, clothed in ermined robe or velvet court suit, have "strutted their brief hour upon life's stage."

Happening, the other day, to take up a volume of Evelyn's Diary, (a book in which I love to consume an idle hour,) I opened upon a passage, that cannot fail to interest all who love children. As it is peculiarly quaint and pathetic I shall give it in the author's own words.

"A. D. 1657-8. Jan'y.—After six fits of a quartan ague with which it pleased God to visite him, died my deare son Richarde, to our inexpressible griefe and affliction, 5 yeares, and 3 dayes old onely, but at that tender age, a prodigy for witt and understanding; for beautie of body a very angell; for endowment of mind of incredible and rare hopes. To give onely a little taste of them, and thereby, glory to God, sense of God, he had learned all his catechisme, who out of the mouth of babes and infants does sometimes perfect his praises; at 2 and a halfe yeares old, he could perfectly reade any of ye Englishe, Latine, French, or Gothic letters, pronouncing the three first languages exactly. He had before the 5th. yeare, or in that yeare, not onely skill to reade most written hands, but to decline all the nouns, conjugate the verbs regular, and most of ye irregular; learned out '*Puerilis*' got by heart almost ye entire vocabularie of Latine and French primitives and words, could make congruous syntax, turne Englishe unto Latine, and *vice versâ*, construe and prove what he read, and did the government and use of relatives, verbs, substantives, elipses and many figures and tropes, and made considerable progress in Comenius' *Jamia*; began himselfe to write legibly, and had a strong passion for Greeke. The number of verses he could recite was prodigious, and what he remembered of the parts of playes, which he would also act, and when seeing a *Plautius* in one's hand, he asked what booke it was,

Original.

THE HAUNTED HOMESTEAD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BROTHERS," "CROMWELL," ETC.

THE REVELATION.

DAYS, weeks, and months rolled on—and still, as we have said, night after night the fearful din, the crash succeeded by those fiendish yells and that appalling laughter, rang through the haunted chambers of the Hawknest Tavern. For a brief space the inmates strove to maintain their dwelling despite these awful visitations—but brief indeed was that space! For guest by guest, the old familiar customers fell off, deserting their accustomed stations by the glowing hearth in winter, or on the cool and shadowy stoop in the warm summer evenings. So widely did the terrors spread of the mysterious and unearthly sounds, which now clothed with a novel-horror the dark pass of the Ashuelot, that travellers began to shun the route entirely, preferring a circuitous and more fatiguing road to one whereon the Spirits of the Dead held, as it was almost universally believed, nocturnally their hellish orgies. The few and humble wayfarers who still held to the wonted path, hurried along, as the Spanish tourist has it, with beard on shoulder, stealing at every turn a fearful glance around them making no halt nor tarrying on their journey, and shunning the pass altogether, save when the sun rode high in heaven.

The consequences of this change were sad in the extreme to Hartley—his occupation gone, his customers departed, his old friends gazing on him with doubtful and suspicious eyes, poverty staring in his face, driven forth from his home at last by the overwhelming awe of those dread noises—he and his family were suddenly reduced from moderate affluence and comfort to the extremity of sordid want. A little cabin framed of rude logs received them, a miserable hut, which had been raised for temporary occupation only, within a gunshot of the fatal bridge whereby the hapless traveller had fallen, involving in his ruin the innocent family of him who warned and would have succored him.

Game at this time abounded in the wild woods around, and by his rifle only did the unhappy landlord now support his once rich and respected household.

It is the way of this world to judge ever by result—and before long men who had known him from his cradle, and known his probity and worth, began to shrink from him, as one on whom the judgment of an offended Providence had weighed too visibly—whom punishment divine had marked out as a sinner of no small degree! They shrank from him at market, they drew aside from his contaminating touch even in the house of prayer—all shunned him, all with the exception of one man believed him guilty—guilty of that too, which by no possibility, he could have committed—the murder of that youth who died at two miles distance, while Hartley was employed before the eyes of many in his own crowded bar-room. The man—the only man who drew yet closer, to his side, who to the limit of his own scanty

means assisted him, was Dirk, the hunter, while he who spoke the loudest in suspicious hints, and dark insinuations—who was he but the murderer!

Two years had passed, and now inseparable friends, Hartley and Dirk roved over the rude mountains side by side—there was no rock-ribbed summit which their adventurous feet had not mounted; no glen so deep but had resounded to the crack of their true rifles. Not a beast of the hills, nor a fowl of the air, but ministered to their support; and, though avoided by the neighbors as a spot, guilt-stricken and accursed, the little hut of Hartley was once again the scene of humble comfort, and of content at least, if not of happiness. The peltry, conveyed by old Dirk to the nearest market, sold or exchanged, yielded the foreign luxuries of clothing, groceries and liquor—the flesh of the deer, the hare, or the ruffled grouse simmered as temptingly on gridiron or stewpan, and tasted full as well, as veal or mutton. The little garden plot tended by Hartley's eldest, a fine lad now rising towards manhood, was rich with many a succulent root and savory herb. All prospered—poorly indeed, but hopefully and humbly!—all prospered save the man! No soothing of his anxious wife, no sparkling merriment of his loved children, no consolation cheery and bold of his bluff fellow could chase the now habitual gloom from Hartley's honest brow. To be suspected had sank, like the iron of the psalmist, into his very soul. To be condemned of men, no error ever proved against him—to be shunned like the haggard wolf—pointed by every finger in execration and contempt.

Two years had passed—and the same time, which had cast down the innocent from the good will of men, from the communion of his fellows, from wealth and happiness and comfort, had raised the real murderer to affluence and respect and honor. For many months after the perpetration of his crime, he had pursued his ordinary avocations of the hard-working occupant of a small mountain farm; but when he found that suspicion had cast no glimpse toward him but had on the contrary fixed steadfastly upon another, he gave out that a rich uncle had died suddenly far off in Massachusetts, had journeyed thitherward, been absent several weeks, and returned rich in cattle, moveables and money, his wealthy kinsman's heir. The mountain farm, which had been mortgaged heavily, was cleared from all incumbrance. A new and handsome dwelling-house erected on a knoll overlooking proudly what was now called the Bridge of Blood, and Hartley's low-browed cabin. Gardens stretched down in pretty terraced slopes to the brink of the arrowy stream; orchards were planted in the rear; fine barns and out-houses erected, among which stood now desolate and fast decaying the former homestead—the very hovel through the unshuttered lattices of which the Allens' had looked for and witnessed the feigned slumbers of the foul assassin.

Two years, as has been said, had passed; when one tempestuous evening old Dirk who still, as he would boast at times, feared neither man nor devil—set forth on his return from Fitzwilliam, whither he had come in the morning with a large pack of beaver. In driving a

hard bargain with a pedlar for his peltry, hour of daylight after hour had slipped away unheeded, and supper was announced before the terms of sale were finally concluded—despite his wish to get home early, the veteran hunter could not refuse the invitation to “sit by,” and it was eight o'clock before he started homeward—his pack supplied him with broadcloth and fifty things beside, in lieu of its furred peltry, his trusty rifle balanced upon his shoulder, and his heart fortified, had that been needful, by a good stirrup cup of right Jamaica. Then as will often happen when men are most in haste, accident after accident befell him; none indeed very serious, or even troublesome, but still sufficient to delay him on his route, so that his practised eye read clearly from the position of the stars which blinked forth now and then from their dim canopy of storm that midnight was at hand ere he reached the old Hawknest.

“Well! well,” he muttered to himself as he approached its lonely and decaying walls—“well! well, I’ve heern it afore now, and I guess it wont be the death of me, if I should hear it once again!”

Just then the winds rose high and swept the storm-clouds clear athwart the skies, and left them bright and sparkling with their ten thousand lamps of living fire.—“Ha!” he exclaimed as he looked up—“I reckon its full time for ’t now,” and as he spoke he stood and gazed with a strange sense of curiosity and wonder not altogether unmixed, it is true, with a sort of half-pleasing apprehension. The windows, where the glass was yet entire, reflected back the quiet radiance of the moon—the door-way, wide open—for the door fallen inwards hung by one rusted hinge—showed cavernous and dark in the calm gleamy light—a bright wind whispered in the branches of the huge cluster, and a small thread of water from the horse-trough gurgled along its pebbly channel with a sweet peaceful murmur. The hunter’s wonderment increased as he stood gazing at the tranquil scene, and he determined after a little hesitation to sit down by the streamlet’s edge and wait to satisfy himself whether the fearful sounds still haunted the old tavern, or whether they indeed as he now half surmised had ceased for ever. No sooner was his resolution taken than he began to act on it—a moment’s search sufficed to find a moss-grown seat of rock, another and his huge limbs were outstretched by the marge of the tinkling runnel, while with an eye as tranquil and as serene a brow, as though he were anticipating some long promised pleasure, he waited the repetition of the mysterious sounds which had so long driven from those mouldering walls all human occupants. In vain however did he wait, for the moon set, and the stars twinkled and went out, and amber clouds clothed the eastern firmament and day burst forth in its glory and no more fearful noise than the air murmuring in the branches, and the rill gurgling down to meet the noisier river, and the shrill accent of the katydid and cricket, the melancholy wailing of the whip-poor-will, or the far whooping of the answered owl fell on the hunter’s ear. Cheery of heart he started up as the day dawned and hurried homeward with glad tidings—the Hawknest was no longer haunted!

On the next night at about nine o'clock a light was

shining from the casement of the old bar-room, whence no light had flashed gladness on the traveller’s eyes for many a weary month. Two men sat by the old round table on which lay, ready to each hand two ponderous rifles, a watch, some food and liquor, and last not least a copy of the Testament! They were old Dirk, the hunter, and his comrade, Hartley, who had returned to pass the night in that spot, and satisfy themselves fully that the disturbance was at rest for ever. It needs not to rehearse what passed that night—suffice it that no sound nor sight occurred, save the accustomed rural noises of the neighborhood; and that some two hours before daylight, they left the place convinced and joyfully on their route homeward.

Homeward they walked in glad and joyous converse, ’till on a sudden as they reached a little height commanding from a distance a view of ——’s new house and farm buildings, their eyes were suddenly attracted by an appearance of bright dancing lights—as of the aurora borealis—flashing and streaming heavenward from a focus situated as it seemed in the rear of the new-planted orchards. Strange were the sights indeed, flashes of vivid flame upleaping suddenly from earth and then a long dark interval and then a glimmering glow pervading the whole circuit of the homestead. Believing that a fire had burst out suddenly among the out buildings the veterans dashed forward with the wind and nerve that hunters can alone possess. They scaled the rocky height, dashed through the muddy hollow, reached the spot and there from the old house, now desolate and quite deserted, they saw these fearful flashes bursting at every instant. Through every chink and cranny of the door, the walls, the shutters, streamed the deep crimson glare, along the roof tree danced meteoric balls, of an unearthly pallid lustre on either gable that permanently fixed a globe of lurid fire.

“Fire! fire!” shouted Dirk—“Fire! halloo! halloo! Hans! the old house is a fire!” And with the words he rushed against the door and striking it with the sole of his foot broke every bar and fastening and drove it inwards, but within all was dark!—deep—solid—pitchy blackness.

Hartley and Dirk stared for a moment blankly each in the other’s face, but the next they were met by ——, asking them with a volley of fierce imprecations what they intended by waking up his household thus with a false alarm.

“False alarm!” answered Dirk; “why had you seen it, I guess you’d not ha’ thought it so false anyhow, why man, the whole air was alight with it.”

“Pshaw! you’re drunk both on you,” returned the other. “You’ve brought your gammon to the wrong place, my men. Don’t you see all’s dark and quiet here, as honest men’s homes ought to be. What are you arter I’d pleased be to know this time o’night!”

“That’s neither here nor there,” responded Dirk, “we saw a fire up here-a-ways and we come neighbor-like to tell you on’t.”

“Well! where’s the fire now, I’d like to be showed, then I’ll think as how you meant honestly, and that’s

more too I tell you than all would, leastwise all men as knooed you, Hartley."

While these words had been passing, the party had been moving rapidly from the out-buildings, all walking fast under considerable excitement of their feelings toward the house, when suddenly Dirk turned about and instantly pointing toward the old homestead replied "THERE 'TIS!"—and sure enough there the self-same appearances were visible! The red flames glaring out from every crack and cranny, the lurid flashes streaming high into air above the roof tree—the incandescent globes sitting on either gable. "THERE 'TIS!—what d'ye say now?"

"Pshaw! stuff," replied the other, "is that all?" and entered the house instantly slamming the door violently after him.

"Is that all?—then he's used to it," muttered the other—"come aways, Hartley, come aways now I tell ye!—BLOOD WILL OUT!—Blood will out, man, and here I'm on the track on't now I tell you!"

Home they returned that night, and laid their plans in secret—the seventh day afterward—during the nights of all that seven, Hartley and Dirk watched undisturbed in the tavern, while the two Allens' lay in wait around the murderer's homestead, and every night beheld those wild and ominous flashes—the seventh day afterward a busy crowd were hard at work, masons and carpenters, about the ruined Hawknest. Hammers were clanging, saws were whistling and grating, and above all the merry hum of light, free hearted labor rose on the morning air. On the tenth day the family returned to take possession, the old sign was hung out, the old bar was replenished with its accustomed bottles, and all things fell again into their ordinary course. Meanwhile night after night, the Allens' and old Dirk hung round — buildings, and still the bellish lights were seen glancing and flashing bright and clearly visible for many a mile around, and still no note was taken by — or any of his household. The autumn passed away—winter came on cold, cheerless, and severe; and the old Hawknest tavern once again re-established with all its pristine comforts, travellers once more turned their steps along the wonted road; old friends too, as prosperity returned, returned with many a greeting—men wondered how they could have doubted or for a moment thought ill of kind, good neighbor Hartley. As these events took place, rumor, and public talk were busy with —! With the descent of Hartley's star, to borrow the Astronomer's jargon, his had arisen gloriously—now Hartley was again in the ascendant; and his correspondingly declined! No fear however—no dark anticipation appeared to cloud his days—his nights, despite those fearful sights, were seemingly all fearless. Still the spies lay around him, they listened at his fastened doors, they peeped in through his guarded casements, and ere long murmurs went through the mouths how — and his wife strove fiercely, how no peace was in that household, how no prosperity had followed those ill-gotten gains.

One night old Dirk, with his two comrades, lay there as was their wont, marking their destined prey, that night more terribly than ever the furious flames arose, and

sounds unheard before—the same wild yells and bursts of fiendish laughter which had driven Hartley from his Hawknest, rang round the gleaming buildings! That night more bitterly than ever rose from within the dwelling house the voices of contention and strife. The shrill notes of the terrified and angry wife, pealed piercingly into the ears, while the deep imprecations of the man, answered like muttering thunder. At length the door burst open—lantern in hand — rushed forth. "By G—," he cried, "this night shall finish it, or finish me!" AND IT DID BOTH!

Straight he rushed to the desolate building, entered it, and again after brief stay rushed forth as if beneath the goad of Orestes' furies—dashed back into his own dwelling—and within ten minutes' time, a volume of fierce *real* flame burst out of every crack and cranny—the shingled walls blazed out, the thatch flared torch-like heavenward—the rafters smouldered and cracked, and leaped out into living flame, and all glowed like a tenfold furnace, and rushed earthward and was dark. The Haunted Homestead was no more upon the earth!

With that night ceased all sights or sounds unearthly, but still suspicion ceased not. Ceased not—nay it waxed ten times wilder, more rife, more stirring than before! Men muttered secretly no longer, but spoke aloud their doubts—almost their certainty. Meantime winter wore onward—Christmas was passed, and February's snows had covered the whole face of nature. It was a dark and starless night—the wonted party were assembled in the old bar room, when there arrived a stranger, a tall, dark, handsome, military-looking man, on whom scarce had Dirk's eyes and Hartley's fallen ere a quick meaning glance was interchanged between them. The likeness struck both on the instant, strange likeness to the murdered traveller.

With his accustomed depth of wild sagacity, the veteran hunter turned, without noticing apparently the stranger, on the occurrences which had so strangely agitated the inmates of that house and valley. Ere long the stranger's face gave token of anxiety and wonder, and one word led to others, and questions answered brought but fresh questions, until it came out that the man before them had at a period corresponding to that of the commencement of our tale lost his only brother—one whose demeanor and appearance agreed in all particulars with the description given by the woodmen of the unhappy traveller, who had fallen.

It was resolved on the next morning to probe the mystery to the utmost. An appointment was made instantly for an early hour on the following day, when the two Allens, Dirk, and Hartley, professed their readiness to guide their new friend to the scene of the murder. But as the woodmen departed one or two noticed that the night had changed—that it was mild and soft, and the snow sloppy under foot, and all predicted confidently that the slight snow would be gone on the morrow.

And so in truth it was, morn came, and the whole earth was bare, and the soft western wind swept with a mild low sigh over the woody hills. Scarce had the morning dawned, ere they were on the ground—and lo!

wonder of wonders—on one spot, exactly on the site of the burnt building a little space of snow lay still—there was none else for miles around—precisely in the form of a man's body.

"He's there," cried Dirk exultingly, "he's there!—when there's a ground thaw the snow always lies over a buried log or any thing that checks the rising heat—he's there. Get axes, boys, and you'll see as I tell's true!"

Axes and crows were brought, the earth was upturned, and there! there! under the very spot whereon the murderers bed had stood the night he slept so calmly—there lay a human skeleton—a few shreds of green cloth, bordered with narrow cords of gold, a pair of horse-man's pistols, rusted and green with mould. The stranger seized them "Oh, God!" he cried, "my brother's—oh! my brother's!"

The tale is told—for it boots not to dwell upon the murderer's seizure—his agony—confession and despair. Enough the Hawknest tavern still invites the weary travellers to enter its low portal—and Hartley's name in this, third generation, is blazoned on the time-worn sign post, while near the Bridge of Blood a heap of shattered ruins are still pointed out, where stood the *Haunted Homestead*.
H. W. H.

Original.

TO A LADY;

WHO SENT HER ALBUM TO THE WRITER FOR A CONTRIBUTION.

BY SAMUEL WOODWORTH.

AND dost thou then request a lay,
From one to thee unknown?
One who without that kindling ray,
Which bright inspiring eyes convey,
Could never wake a tone.

Alas! the heartless lines I trace,
Will have no charms for thee;
For if Peru's untutored race
Had never seen their god's bright face,
How cold their prayers would be.

'Tis true that Fame, in brightest dyes
Her magic pencil dips;
To paint the mental charms I prize,
Reflected from thy sparkling eyes,
Or warbled from thy lips.

But, ah! however bright we own,
The portrait all admire,
The fair *original* alone
Could waken feeling's purest tone,
From my neglected lyre.

When thou wouldst catch the dew-drops, shook
From Fancy's glittering wing,
With thy own hand present the book,
And with thy own bewitching look
Inspire the bard to sing.

Original.

"OUR LIBRARY."—No. VI.

BY EMMA C. EMBURY.

A RAINY DAY AT LEBANON.

"Shadows—shadows all!"

WHAT a melancholy thing is a rainy day at a fashionable watering-place! What a host of 'nothing-to-do' diseases is called up by the necessity of relying upon one's own resources, without the aid of walking, riding, or sight-seeing! Even those who, if at home, would look with great complacency upon dull weather, because it would afford them uninterrupted leisure, are discontented and listless, tired of themselves, wearied of doing nothing, and impatient of the restraint to which they are compelled. It was my lot, some years since, to pass such a day at Lebanon Springs. The rain fell gently and softly, but steadily, and while it vested the distant hills as if by a curtain of silver gauze, gave to every thing immediately around the house, a most dripping, drooping, melancholy appearance; thus affording a practical illustration of the poetical fact, that "*distance* lends enchantment to the view." It happened to be Monday, and as the great Lion of the place—the Shakers' establishment, had been visited on the previous Sabbath, there was not even the pleasure of anticipation to support the courage of those who found themselves prisoners at large. The gentlemen congregated upon the piazzas, in the elegant attitudes invariably assumed on such occasions, with the chair tilted back, the feet elevated by the balustrade, or some friendly pillar, to a level with the head, the arms crossed on the breast, the hat crushed down to the eyebrows, and a segar fuming in the mouth, tried hard to drag through the morning. Occasionally an individual, more hardy than the rest, wrapped himself in his cloak, and with head bent down, in the position necessary when passing under the sheet of water at Niagara, hurried to the bath-house. The ladies fidgetted from window to window, and watched the dull leaden sky, in the vain hope of descrying a patch of blue. Some of the younger ones attempted a flirtation with the whiskered and tobacco-scented beaux, others essayed to extract music from the discordant piano, and one, (with even less success, however, than her companions,) made a desperately heroic effort to read Miss Martineau's Society in America. But all would not do, and, after an early dinner, the ladies retired to sleep away the heavy hours, while the gentlemen dispersed, either to follow their example, or to get up a snug game of whist, in the retirement of their own apartments.

Our party, which was a large and remarkably pleasant one, had been sufficiently wearied with a long journey to enjoy one day of perfect quiet, and we had, therefore, been much amused by the restlessness exhibited around us. But as we drew round a window after dinner, our conversation assumed a somewhat graver character, and the peculiar superstitions of the Shakers, gave rise to a discussion, which led to a most singular result.

"I know not how persons can look with mirth upon such a painful exhibition of human weakness," said one